

# Land O'Lakes Member-Owners Talk Trade, Farm Bill and Immigration Reform

## Board Visit to D.C.



With the dairy economy sagging, ProVision Partners decided to hold its annual board meeting in Washington so members could also talk with federal lawmakers from their home state of Wisconsin. Each year co-op leaders travel out-of-state for the board meeting.

The ProVision Partners fly-in visit to Washington is a pilot advocacy program of sorts, Price says. Land O'Lakes hosts annual fly-ins with cooperative members, but this was the first time a member co-op partnered with the Government Relations team to host a fly-in of its own.

"We're trying to figure out how best to engage more of our farmers in advocacy work," she says. "We are test-ing this to see how it goes. And if it goes well, we will build on it."

Price says ProVision Partners' leaders received better access to lawmakers by leveraging Land O'Lakes than if they traveled to Washington on their own. "We think there is value for a lot of our members," she says. "It's a service we're trying to provide."

The ProVision contingent met with Senator Tammy Baldwin and representatives from the offices of Senator Ron Johnson, and Representatives Ron Kind (WI-3) and Sean Duffy (WI-7). Chuck Connor, president and CEO of the National Council of

Farmer Cooperatives, also spoke to the group.

David Brill, board chairman of ProVision, deemed the trip a success. Trade and the MPP were two issues co-op leaders stressed with legislators.

"Our board explained the problems we're having down on the farm and the real effects of the issues on hand in today's world," he says.

Abby Daul, 17, a junior at Marshfield High School, was there with her father, Ben, a ProVision director. It was her first trip to Washington, and she participated in the legislative meetings. Abby posed two questions to legislative aides: How can we get more involved with getting kids to visit farms through school activities (Food for America programs) and how can we achieve getting a fair price so the younger generation can become part of the farm?

"I was a little skeptical at first if they were going to listen to us and take it back, but I believe they will," she said. Land O'Lakes works hard to take a leadership position on legislative issues of importance to our industry. But our true strength lies in the collective voice of our cooperative system through great member advocacy examples like this and many others. Thank you to everyone who raised their voice on key issues and shared the story of modern agriculture.